AFDAT/[redacted]/71791/15 Oct 59

[illegible] FOR DEFENSE, RESEARCH AND ENGINEERING, OSD

SUBJECT: (U) Transfer of the DISCOVERER Development Program to the Department of the Air Force

References: Secretary of Defense Memorandum, subject: Coordination of Satellite and Space Vehicle Operations, dated 13 September 1959

In response to the above memorandum, the Department of the Air Force requests the immediate transfer of the DISCOVERER program to the Air Force. While it is recognized that the referenced memorandum does not specifically identify the DISCOVERER program, the assignment of responsibility for this program to the DOF appears to be a logical and minimum extension of the SAMOS, MIDAS, booster and systems integration assignments which have been approved.

The DISCOVERER development program is designed to study the problems related to the achievement of stabilized orbits, altitude stabilization, operational system techniques, recovery of biomedical payloads and the execution of unmanned advanced engineering tests. Development will continue at the approved fund level for FY '60 and in accordance with the approved development plan dated 30 January 1959 as modified by existing ARPA Orders. Upon transfer of program responsibility, funds, and documentation, the DOF will make a detailed survey of the status of the DISCOVERER program and submit a revised development plan that incorporates existing ARPA Orders, a current development plan, and any necessary changes that become apparent as a result of the detailed survey.

The current schedule for the DISCOVERER program is as follows:

1959												1960											
J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
1	1		1		2		2	2	2			1	1	1	1	2	2	2	2				

The total DISCOVERER test flight program now consists of 25 combinations of Thor and Atlas vehicles. Because of difficulties in the DISCOVERER V and VI flights, two months have elapsed since the last launch. During

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this time, a concerted effort has been undertaken by the Lockheed Corporation and others to determine possible causes and fixes relative to the problem of recovery of the payload from orbit. It is now expected that the next flight will occur during the latter part of this month.

The funding requirements to meet the program objectives are as follows:

	$K
FY 1960	$3.6
FY 1961	[redacted]

AFDAT

AFDAT, Coord Ltr
AFDDC, Info Ltr
AFOCB, Info Ltr
AFOMC, Info Ltr
AFSDC, Info Ltr
AFCIN, Info Ltr
AFAAC, Info Ltr
AFCRC, Info Ltr
OAFED, Ltr or Sig